

MONSTERLAND

STAR TREK IV

THE SECRETS REVEALED!



JULY 1986

NUMBER 11

MONSTER LAND

48426

\$2.25

\$2.75 Canada

£1.95 UK DGS

**MAKEUP CONTEST
WINNERS REVEALED!**

**THE DARK
SHADOWS OF
BARNABAS
COLLINS**

**SNEAK PEEK
THE BOY WHO
COULD FLY!**

**JOHN
CARPENTER
HAS BIG TROUBLE
IN LITTLE CHINA**

EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW OF:

A L I E N S

**THE BEAST
FROM 20,000
FATHOMS**



**FREE
POSTER
INSIDE!**



EDITORIAL

This is Evila, welcoming you to another horror day in Monsterland! This time I finally get around to letting you in on who's imagination was so far out that Joe Dante picked him as the weirdest of the weird to win the Monsterland Makeup Contest! You should have seen the entries—it looked like my family reunion!

And lest you think you're all out of luck now, we have a new contest boiling in the brew, and all you have to do is... wait until I announce what it is, maybe next issue!

Speaking of next issue, some of you have wanted to peek under my pages and see what I really look like—Well we'll start offering you just that, a peek, in the near future. And hey, get a look at Joey Castro, the monstrous makeup champ on page 27! Wow, I just can't wait to shake his hand! —

Evila

MONSTER

LAND



Lionel Atwill.....16



Makeup Contest.....26



Barnabas Collins.....30

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PRINTED IN CANADA

EDITORIAL.....2

(Evla apills the screams about our contest winner!)

FANTASY FILMARQUEE.....4

(Kong wants his Queen and TZ gets zonad out!)

THE LETTERHEAD.....6

(Scream from the heart of Horrorwood!)

MOVIES PREVIEWED.....9

(Let's meet The Boy Who Could Fly!)

FEARBOOK.....10

(The Bazar From 20,000 Fathoms bites the Big Apple!)

TERRORVISION.....14

(A man named Mars: From Young Frankenstein to TZ!)

MONSTERAMA.....16

(Lionel Atwill: Master of Menace!)

METROPOLIS.....21

(The House That Dripped Blood on Jon Pertwee!)

ALIENSI.....24

(Michael Biehn tries not to get Terminated this time!)

CONTEST WINNERS!.....26

(Find out who's having dinner with Joe Dante!)

CREATURE FEATURE.....30

(Barnabas Collins: A vampire in spite of himself!)

STAR TREK IV.....35

(Revealing the secrets of Star Trek's new voyage!)

BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA.....51

(John Carpenter takes us on a gilded tour!)

VIDEO CREATURES.....54

(The latest in small screen scares!)

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FANTASY FILMARQUEE



Tom (Michael Sharrett), Samantha (Kristy Swanson) and Paul (Matthew Laborieux) are dismayed when they confront a Beedly Fried in an upcoming release from Warner Bros.

The tidal wave of megalithic monsters, towering titans of terror and hand-crafted horrors is upon us. By the time you read this your local town or city should already have been invaded by a wave of my friends from Monsterland spending their summer vacations at your local theater. Real life monsters will be buying nachos and pop to watch the real life monsters on the screen—what a scream! *Fallgeist II* will continue to show how California real estate can bite back (and it takes place just chopping blocks from your favorite monsternag's editorial offices!) while *Alien* introduces us to some real back-biters (even worse than the usual crop of Hollywood producers and directors!) *Big Trouble in Little China* is a monster mash despite the innocent-sounding title, but we won't be able to see that one until early July—and we won't even be able to see the many monsters in it until then, they just want us to show you pictures of John Carpenter pointing at some things unseen. But hey, we're monster guys and ghouls! We want slime this time! We want paws and claws! Kurt Russell may be purty but I want to see who's dinner he's about to become!

The robot in *Shat Creek* escaped not only from his keepers but into theaters so fast that we won't be covering him until next issue! And no, we haven't forgotten *Legend*—we've got some very special surprises for Tim Curry fans coming up—of the double-barrelled variety! I just love guys with names like Darkness! Speaking of darkness, that's my cue to slip into the background and hide behind the curtain so that I can crank up ye olde Wizard of Ahhs who's got even more news for you!—Evila

CONAN III

Although Arnie is contracted to star in a third Conan film, his muscular talents are in so much demand that his schedule won't be clear for it for another two years! The film'll wait though and they do already have a completed script which may finally return the character to his original personality. Karl Edward Wagner—best known for his Kane S&S hero—has adapted the Robert E. Howard novella

"Beyond the Black River", the story many REH fans feel was his best. Dino DeLaurentiis Productions, now called DEG, is behind this one too. (How about CONAN MEETS KONG?—Evlia)

THE EVIL DEAD II

The low-budget hit *Evil Dead* has spawned a reportedly much more ambitious sequel that is even wilder than the original! The direction is by Sam Raimi, and it stars Bruce Campbell. (And here I thought the *Evil Dead* was an ex-rock group that fled!—Evlia)

TRICK OR TREAT ANYONE?

Actor Charles Martin (Stellan, *Never Cry Wolf*) Smith makes his feature debut with *Trick or Treat*. For Halloween release, natch! This isn't a slice-and-dice though, but just what it is is being kept under wraps for now. (Is my mummy on the loose again?—Evlia)

SOME COMIC TALES

Superman IV, with Chris Reeves back in tights again, is returning the mad scientist you love to hate, Lex Luthor as played by Gene Hackman. Cannon hasn't announced the director on this yet.

Meanwhile, across the comics page, Will Eisner's *Spirit* is coming back to life. He'll make his return as an ABC tv movie starring Sam Jones (who previously played that other four color adventurer, *Flash Gordon*). If this one makes it into your living room, it will come at the end of a long line of unsuccessful attempts to bring the crimebuster to celluloid.

THE KING KONG STOMP, AGAIN

In a coma for years, Kong needs a transfusion to live again. And director John Guillermin, the man behind last decade's remake of the giant ape epic, will see that he gets one! An adventurer, played by Brian Kerwin, finds a Queen Kong in darkest Africa, and thereby hangs a tale. *King Kong Lives* is a holiday sequel set for Christmas release. (But I thought the first one was a comedy!—Evlia)

MORE TERRORVISION

On the heels of the successfully syndicated *Tales of the Darkside* comes Laurel Entertainment's *Moment of Fear*. Fear is set to do for *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* what *Darkside* does for the *Twilight Zone*. Get set for loads of strange suspense stories. A pilot is just completed. (I had a moment of fear with a pilot last night, or was that the other way around?—Evlia)

RUNNING ARNOLD

The Richard Bateman/Stephen King thriller, *The Running Man*, originally set to showcase Christopher Reeve will instead star that ever busy Arnold Schwarzenegger instead. The novel is currently in print in *The Bachman Books* anthology. The story is one of King's rare proseovers into science fiction.



MISTY OL' AVALON

HTV and James Coburn will team up for a \$9 million dollar, six hour teleseries based on Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon*. The series, to be shot in the UK around Glastonbury will feature Coburn ("subject to script approval") as Merlin. (My old friend! How's he been?—Evlia)

MRS. PEEL, YOU'RE NEEDED!

In England, Central TV's one hour fantasy adventure *The Worst Witch*, produced in association with HBO, will star ex-Avenger Diana Rigg. A full ITV network screening is planned for Yuletide. (Sounds like competition to me!—Evlia)

IN THE ZONE

CBS has put *The Twilight Zone* on hiatus with future plans, if any, to be announced this summer.

In televisionland, "hiatus" usually means it's dead. And they rarely come back from the dead! (That's strange, my tv has been showing new episodes of TZ each week for 28 years! Maybe I'm stuck in the Zone!—Evlia)

WES CRAVEN'S BACK!

Craven returns this fall with *Deadly Friend*—his first since *Nightmare on Elm Street*. The film recounts the story of Paul Conway (Matthew Laborteaux), a brilliant high school student who builds a robot to be his best friend. But when he meets Samantha (Kristy Swanson), an incident occurs that forces boy genius to push high tech beyond its limits...with shocking consequences! The screamplay is by Bruce Joel Rubin, based on a novel by Diana Henstell.





Laura Harvey of Rackerby, CA sent in this breath-stealing portrait of the old monster master himself, Karloffornia's premier peril, Boris K.!

REPLY TO: SCARE MAIL
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THE LETTER
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Dear Monsterland,

This is the first time I am writing a letter to a magazine. I am doing it to thank you for publishing such an entertaining and informative magazine. I am the only member of my family that loves horror/fantasy/science fiction movies. I have some suggestions for future issues of *Monsterland*. First, a film (feer) book of the first *Dracula* movie, *Nocturnal*. If that is not possible, may I suggest Boris Karloff's *The Mummy*? Also, since I can't find one anywhere else, how about publishing an interview with Vincent Price? With all the space you're giving the new television shows (*The Twilight Zone* and *Amazing Stories*), for completeness how about a look at the shows of the past? For example, *Dark Shadows* would be greatly welcomed. Movie reviews would also be interesting. Whether or not you use any of my ideas I only have one more thing to say—Keep up the good work!

Daniel Whitman
7218 Algon Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19111

You have suggestions? You mean that we're not perfect? Why I'll have you know that my toothsome chum, Bamabas Collins, was already slated for this issue before you even asked! And as for a Fearbook on *Drac*, we're working on it! After all, we've got a stake in making you happy!—Evla

Dear Monsterland,

In regards to Garydon Rhodes criticism of Anthony Timpona's Karloff/Lugosi article, I would like to clear up a few points.

First of all, Timpona is right. *Dracula* doesn't stand the test of time. (But then a lot of vampires don't—Evla) In today's flurry of non-stop action pictures, unrelenting horror and flashy special effects, even *Frankenstein* becomes fairly dated. *Dracula*'s horror lies in its meticulous set design and suggested horror and was actually nothing more than a filmed version of the stage play, which makes for dreadfully slow pacing. *Frankenstein*'s special effects and the monster's direct assaults keep the action moving, which allows it to remain watchable even with today's audience.

Although it's true that Lon Chaney was asked to play the monster in *Ghost of Frankenstein*, the reason was

because after *Son of Frankenstein*, Karloff made it positively clear that he no longer wished to play the monster. Universal knew it would be useless to ask. Saying that medical reasons was why Karloff bowed out is ridiculous. Karloff could have had Ed Parker double for his difficult scenes as well. Besides, 21 years later Karloff did play the monster again in the "Lizards Leg and Owlets Wing" episode of *Nests 66*.

The fact that Karloff's portrayal of the monster required makeup does not make him any less talented. No one even knew what Karloff looked like under the makeup and he was fourth billed as a "T" in the beginning credits. Yet he rose above this to become a major star. Everyone knew it took a highly talented actor to bring believability to the monster role.

It is a fact that Lugosi was generally provided with fine management by Don Marlow, Lugosi's manager and good friend. However, Bela was usually either rich or broke. When he was broke he would simply take the next role to come along so he could make some quick cash. With better control of his finances he may have been able to hold out for the better roles that he deserved.

United Artists was the only major studio to offer Bela a job after his drug confession. They needed as many horror actors as they could find so their names could be exploited in *The Black Sleep*.

The most disturbing point in Mr. Rhodes' letter is his comparison between Karloff and Lugosi as actors. They were two distinct personalities, each with their own unique acting style. Both made the most of their roles regardless of what they had to work with. Individually they created the two most influential characters in the history of horror films. Comparisons between the two is not only unnecessary but totally ridiculous.

Joe A. Johnson
4720 Greely Chapel Rd.
Lima, OH 45808

Dear Monsterland,

Monsterland has become the one magazine on my "must buy" list.

I'd like to outline a few things about *Monsterland* and its principal competitor, *Fangoria*. I wish to examine the merits of both magazines as well as the problems I see with both publications. (You mean there are other monster mags? But my slaymates, the Schusters, insisted that I was one of a kind! I want to hear more about this!—Evla)

Famous Monsters of Filmland was the first magazine dedicated exclusively to horror and fantasy films. For 25 years, new and old horrors were covered in depth, and many of the present day heroes of horror and fantasy grew up on FM. The magazine was a clean, positive experience. Editor Ackerman often spoke out to his young readers on the dangers of smoking and drugs. He kept many old-time fantasy film actors and filmmakers from obscurity. He made the vital statistics of all the greats and near greats common knowledge for any in-

terested—and there were a lot of us who did care. I'm one of them!

Fangoria was born in the wake of *Star Wars*; the deluge of fantasy efforts in the wake of Lucas's instant classic gave these sort of films a new audience. Ferge was almost an immediate hit; it was the first magazine to compete with *FM* in terms of popularity. In many ways it surpassed *FM*; the production quality of Ferge was much better, the photos were in color, etc. The writing was aimed at a somewhat older audience. *FM*, being limited by rather poor production values and a decidedly juvenile writing style, it was something of a dinosaur compared to the sophisticated new-comer. It was perhaps inevitable that *FM* died.

Now Ferge was the undisputed monsternag of America, and although more sophisticated in content and with higher production values, the magazine somehow lost something. The emphasis on gore and epithet movies, and the almost complete disregard for the past (*FM*'s strongpoint) left the magazine—cold. Tears were shed for the late, lamented *FM*. *I hear it was a closed-casket funeral*! —Evile)

Now we have *Monsterland*, and in many ways this new mag is better than all that have come before. Here, with high quality production and better writing was everything *FM* could have been—and more. My joy at finding this mag knows no bounds. *I don't think that joy should have bounds, but sometimes my joy strays out of bounds, but...* —Evile)

Ferge does have many meritable traits, unfortunately what is in today and what comes tomorrow seem to be the only interests for the writers and the editors—and that goes for the audiences, I guess. Judging from the letters and the classified ads, Ferge's readers are more than 'into' gore films and heavy metal rock. I'm not condemning these more outrageous horror-inspired interests, but they aren't my cup of tea. The milder, almost innocent past seems without the slightest attraction to this new generation. And although I'm sure Ferge's readers are roughly my age, I still prefer the more cerebral horrors *FM* was so good at showing.

Earlier I mentioned the good things *FM* had going for it. Well, I feel that many of these things have been revived in *Monsterland*. But there are still some things you might consider adding. *(Here it comes! — Evile)* The single greatest improvement you could make would be painted covers. I recently discovered about 30 back issues of *FM* at a local comics shop and the covers were really the best thing about them. Oh, for new covers by Basil Gogol! I'm sure there are also other artists out there who could contribute some wonderful works. The problem with the covers of *Monsterland* is that they are always crowded. They all look alike to me and I am sometimes confused (since there is no issue number given on the front cover) as to whether I've read the issue already. Thus if we could have an occasional (or even frequent) painted cover, I think that the magazine would be greatly improved. If some of the old features from *FM* could be resurrected—such as the You Axed

For It and the Mystery Photo columns—I think that would be great.

So in conclusion, let me say that the best characteristics of both Ferge and *FM* could be combined in *Monsterland*. It could then be the best fantasy magazine ever!

Jonathan Malcolm Lampley
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What do you think of painted covers? FrightFans? Last issue we had 2 (on the back cover and inside front) courtesy of Empire Films. It was nice, wasn't it? Sort of a screed came true. As far as what set us apart from other guys, I think that gore is a chore. I get out of the house to get away from that! Give me slivering, electrode-festooned monsters dripping with slime any day! —Evile

TASTY TIDBITS FROM YOUR SCAREMAIL!

*Oh! Evile may be a bit slow but she's just figured out what you're talking about when some of you keep asking about getting some monster stamps. The ones in the "Letterhead" logo aren't issued from the Skull Island domain or even from Transylvania! They're (gasp!) counterfeit stamps drawn up by artist Allen Kozowski! Great job, eh? I know that they look real, but then why would Agonizing Allen draw something that looked fake? * * * James L. Battelfeld of Chambersburg, Illinois says, "I'm into dinosaurs, giant octopi and all creatures that Ray Harryhausen creates. I have seen movies he has made since I was a little monster myself!" * * * Rudy Gonzales of Mathis, Texas wants to know if we're going to print any more articles on the Living Dead movies of George Romero? (As a fan of me, I've got something very unusual in the works along those lines. So unique that I can't let you have a peak... yet—Evile) * * * Dan Day of South Bend, Indiana asks, "When are you going to run an article on the incredible Lionel Atwill?" (Sooner than you'd imagine, Denny boy—Evile) * * * Cliff Son of Staten Island is editor of a filmzine called *Basket Case* (which also covers death-oriented bands like The Undead and Ed Gein's Corp). Cliff says that *Monsterland* is "... the dead risen from the ashes of the long deceased. Like a vampire for a ghoul of a long and forgotten friend." (Thank! I think... Evile) Maurice G. Douglas of Dix Hills, New York asks, "Why hasn't the *Nefarious* remake been released on home video? I'm undying to see it!" (W/N no doubt rear up soon, Maurice. After all, you can't keep the undead down! — Evile)*

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MOVIES

PREVIEWED!

THE BOY WHO COULD FLY

Milly (Lucy Deidra) shows Eric (Jay Underwood) how to go fly a kite.



Milly looks out her window at the lad next door—a boy who is really going places!

Nick Castle, who played The Shape in the original *Halloween* and turned to directing with *The Last Starfighter*, is back with a more down-to-earth project in the form of *The Boy Who Could Fly*.

The film is a story of someone who can do extraordinary things because he has the strength to dream. Castle, who wrote and directed the picture, got the idea for

the script when he was reading a Disney storybook to his son and thought about doing a modern fable based on those timeless ideas. It's an unusual film which is opening in August, which is shaping up to be a hot month for genre pics, what with Stephen King's *The Body*, Wes Craven's *Deadly Friend* and *The Flight of the Navigator* all opening then, too!



FEARBOOK



NEW YORK'S BLUE KNIGHTS TAKE ON A DRAGON.

A CLASSIC MONSTERLAND FILMBOOK: THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS

BY DOUGLAS BORTON

"Sleeper."

Few words raise goosebumps faster in Horrorwood! The dictionary defines "sleeper" as a low-budget movie with limited expectations, which to everyone's surprise becomes a major boxoffice hit.

In 1953, the definition was a lot simpler. "Sleeper" meant *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*.

Made for the paltry sum of \$200,000, this Warner Bros. thriller started the '50s monster-on-the-loose craze which gave us *Them!* (1954), *It Came from Beneath the Sea* (1955), *Godzilla, King of the Monsters* (1956), *The Giant Behemoth* (1959) and countless others. (Many of my friends finally got star-billing!—Evlie)

Unlike many of its imitators, *Beast* featured an intelligent, adult script, solid performances and a moody atmosphere achieved by director Eugene Lourie. But the film's real selling-point was the awesome prehistoric "rhedosaurus," roused from Arctic slumber to level Manhattan in a series of spectacular special effects sequences. The rhedosaurus, a mythical dinosaur larger than any known species, was designed and brought to life by the magic talents of stop-motion animator Ray Harryhausen in his first solo feature film assignment.

As a boy, Harryhausen had cultivated an intense interest in stop-motion terrors after seeing the original big

monkey himself, *King Kong* (1933)! He spent his high school years shooting test footage of rempegging dinosaurs and other prehistoric perils, then went on to animate short subjects based on children's (of all ages!) scary tales. In 1946, Harryhausen was hired by the man who brought *Kong* to life, effects wizard Willis O'Brien. He was to assist in bringing yet another ape to silver screen larger-than-life, the Oscar-winning *Mighty Joe Young* (released in 1949 after three years of hard work). Sadly, the high cost of the animation scenes spelled boxoffice disaster for the film. Harryhausen realized that in the future, he would have to find ways to cut corners and slash costs. (He could have just shot an location in my neighborhood!—Evlie)

When producer Jack Dietz approached Harryhausen with the idea for *Beast*, the screen wizard saw his chance to prove that he could create magic on a shoestring budget. Harryhausen devised new variations on front-end rear-projection techniques to combine his rhedosaurus model with live (?) actors without the need for expensive miniature sets, matte paintings and optical effects. He also arranged for many scenes to take place at night, underwater or in a blizzard to help cover up the rough spots!



THE MONSTER WAKES

Our story begins with an atomic bomb test at the North Pole. When scientist Tom Nesbitt explores the blast site, he discovers an immense prehistoric reptile released from a state of suspended animation by the bomb. The animal starts an avalanche which nearly buries Nesbitt.

When Nesbitt tries to convince base commander Colonel Evans of what he saw, Evans dismisses the wild story as an hallucination. He sends Nesbitt to New York for medical treatment.



TRAFFIC HAZARDS CAN BE TRULY MONSTROUS IN THE BIG CITY

A few nights later, the beast rises from the Atlantic Ocean and sinks a Canadian fishing boat. The captain and first mate barely escape with their lives.

Recuperating in a Manhattan hospital, Nesbitt reads a news story about the shipwreck. In the story, the captain insists that his boat was attacked by a "sea serpent." Nesbitt puts two and two together and concludes that the beast is swimming south to warmer waters.

Leaving the hospital, Nesbitt tells his story to elderly Professor Elson, a gentle, absent-minded paleontologist. Elson is not persuaded. He learned long ago to disregard eye-witness reports of sea serpents, flying saucers and leprechauns. But Elson's beautiful secretary, Leigh Hunter finds herself attracted to Nesbitt and volunteers to help him prove his case.

At Leigh's apartment, Nesbitt looks through artists' conceptions of dozens of dinosaur species until he recognizes one labeled "rhedosaurus." Next, he contacts the first mate of the wrecked fishing boat and convinces him to come to New York, where the man picks out the same drawing.

Professor Elson, knowing the odds against both men having the same "hallucination," tells Colonel Evans that he believes Nesbitt's report is accurate. Though still skeptical, Evans agrees to let the professor know of any other unusual developments along the Eastern seaboard.

TRAIL OF DEATH

Moonlight plays on the ocean. The beast rises slowly from the depths. It wades ashore and destroys a lighthouse, killing the lighthouse keepers.

Evans informs Professor Elson of this and other recent reports of poor fishing, missing bathers and the obliteration of a small coastal town. By charting the trail of destruction, Elson is able to estimate the beast's present location. It seems to be heading for its ancestral spawning grounds—in the Hudson River, just outside New York!

Elson receives permission from the colonial to search for the beast along the ocean floor in a military bathysphere. After hours of fruitless searching, Elson suddenly sees the shadowy form of the rhedosaurus emerging out of the murk. The paleontologist stares, transfixed, as the living dinosaur lumbers closer...closer.... Elson's radio transmission goes dead as the rhedosaurus swallows the bathysphere whole.

ON A RAMPAGE

Nesbitt comforts Leigh, in tears over the old man's death. Meanwhile the dinosaur proceeds to New York and rises up over the docks. Pedestrians flee in terror as the hundred-foot-long monster invades the city, crushing cars, smashing skyscrapers, and gobbling up helpless victims in an orgy of destruction.

That night, Colonel Evans' troops finally manage to corner the dinosaur and bombard it with mortar fire. The wounded rhedosaurus escapes by crashing through a building into the next street. The soldiers, following the trail of blood, begin to drop, unconscious, in the streets.

Doctors determine that the rhedosaurus' blood carries prehistoric bacteria against which modern man has no immunity. Nesbitt tells Colonel Evans that artillery, bombs and fire cannot be used against the dinosaur without spreading the disease further. There is only one way the beast can be stopped. One of Evans' men must fire a radioactive isotope into the monster's bloodstream and kill it by radiation poisoning.

FIERY FINISH

Nesbitt and Evans meet marksman Colonel Stone at the Coney Island amusement park, where the rhedosaurus is ripping apart the roller coaster. Donning radiation suits, Nesbitt and Stone ride to the top of the roller coaster for the best angle of fire.

With one shot, Stone hits the monster in the soft flesh of the neck. As the monster collapses amid the flaming ruins of the roller coaster, its deadly remains are consumed in the raging inferno.



A KING-SIZE CASE OF INDIGESTION!

THEY COULDN'T ESCAPE THE TERROR!

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AND NEITHER WILL YOU!

"The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms"



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to tear a city apart!**

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KENNETH TOBEY • JACK PENNICK

Screen Play by LOU MORHEIM and FRED FREIBERGER

Photography by Jack Russell, A.S.C. • Associate Producer BERNARD W. BURTON

Technical Effects Created by RAY HARRYHAUSEN • Music by David Buttolph

Produced by HAL CROSTER and JACK DIETZ • Directed by EUGENE LOURIE

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story by
RAY BRADBURY

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TERRORVISION



KENNETH MARS From Young Frankenstein to the Twilight Zone

By James Van Hise

Kenneth Mars is an ineane Nazi playwright. At least he was in Mel Brooks' *The Producers* in 1967. Born in 1936, the actor has appeared in such films as *Desperate Characters* (1971), *What's Up Doc?* (1972), *Paper Moon* (1973), *The Parasite View* (1974) and *Night Moves* (1975).

Genre fans will recognize Mars as the Inspector from *Young Frankenstein* (1974). There he played a character with a thick accent who was recognized because he wore a monocle over the patch which covered one eye.

Recently he was seen on tv in an episode of *Murder She Wrote* and the "Tooth or Consequences" episode of the new *Twilight Zone*, where he appears as a thug-like Tooth Fairy. *MONSTERLAND* paid a visit to the set of the new *Twilight Zone* to talk with Kenneth Mars about the many characters he's played.

"It's supposed to be a kind of Bronx-Brooklyn kind of guy. This is a slightly threatening sort of guy. You don't really know what's on his mind and as it turns out you feel that all along he knew that granting the dentist's wishes was going to be a disaster. It plays against the traditional notion of what the Tooth Fairy is like — a little tiny creature with wings that flies around gathering teeth," is how Mars explains his role in "Tooth or Consequences."

Mars is a fan of the old *Twilight Zone* as well as of the anthology format.

"This show is wonderful. It employs adults, unlike most tv you see which is geared toward the youth market and hires people who are 20 years old. That's good news for me. The success of *Murder, She Wrote* is marvelous because they're using character actors on that. By now they should be discovering that there is an audience out there who want to see mature people in television plays tailored around middle-aged or older people."

(What? 60—that's considered adolescent by my friends — Evile)

IN THE BEGINNING, MEL!

Kenneth Mars has worked with Mel Brooks on two films — *The Producers* and *Young Frankenstein*. *The Producers* (a bizarre comedy in which Mars plays a Nazi playwright) was not only the actor's first feature, but Mel Brook's debut film as well.

"Mel is the funniest person there is!" Mars states matter-of-factly. "He's a naturally funny person who immediately kinks reality with some kind of comic insight. I had done a show on Broadway which was trying out and Mel came in to write a scene for it. The show ultimately didn't work but I was playing a very wacky character and Mel loved that. When I saw him some months later, he said

that he was writing a great motion picture and I had a great part in it. The movie was *The Predators* and the part he had actually written for me was the part of the director, who, you may recall, appears in a dress. That was the kind of character I had done in the play. I said, 'No, no, I'm not playing that. I'm playing the Gemen.' He said, 'Oh no you're not!' We went on and on about that and finally he relented and confessed afterwards that it had been his intentions to play it himself.

"Anyway, it was a wonderful character. I wore the same outfit every day and refused to let them clean it so that I would really be as grungy as I looked in the picture. I was renik. When they pulled back from me in the film it was for a very good reason."

In *Young Frankenstein*, Mers played another Gemen. This time he wasn't a Nazi, but rather a take-off on a character who appeared in the Rowland V. Lee *Son of Frankenstein*. He got the part without even testing for it or knowing that the role existed.

"I was in Buffalo doing a British play in which I portrayed an 86 year old Anglican minister. I got a phone call from Mel and he said, 'What are you doing in Buffalo?' I said, 'Well, it was too warm in Rome. So he said, 'Let me ask you something. If you're wearing a patch on your left eye and a monocle on top of the patch, is that too much?' I said of course not. Mel said, 'Good, you've got the part.' So that's how I got that part."

Mars plays the part of the Inspector, a man with a wooden arm, patterned after a similar role played by the late great Lionel Atwill in *Son of Frankenstein*. But Atwill's character didn't wear a monocle over an eye patch.

"They had special cloth which had metal on it so that the magnetized monocle would adhere to the patch and I could take it off, polish it and stick it back on," Mars explains. "That's Mel's mind. Nobody else would think of that but Mel Brooks!"

Mars has a great deal of respect for Lionel Atwill. He admires how that actor was able to make the character believable.

"It's one thing to get laughs with that wooden arm," Mars states, "but it's another thing not to get laughs with that wooden arm. Lionel Atwill did it marvelously. That is a brilliant character as he did it, so I wasn't really doing Lionel Atwill in *Young Frankenstein*. To my mind, Atwill played one of the great screen characters."

(Screen characters? He just copied my neighbor across the lagoon — Evile)

CRITICISM VS. THE ACTOR

The bane of the performer is criticism which decimates but does not illuminate. Every actor has to deal with this. But it is rare when an actor can fight back and lampoon the critics.

"I did a fun character in *What's Up Doc?* which was — I guess it's safe to say now — loosely based on the critic John Simon. He was the villain of the piece.

"In one of his books, which was reprinted, by the way," Mars emphasizes, "I looked at it and sure enough, there in the index was Kenneth Mars. I zipped through the book and it said that Kenneth Mars had supposedly played him—and was terrible! Maybe I was too close to reality. But it wasn't wasted on some of the critics who got a kick out of it—it was a bit of an inside joke. The trouble with



BEHIND THE SCENES ON MARS' TWILIGHT ZONE SEG.

John Simon is that he's depressingly intent on hurting actors in his reviews. It's one thing to critique actors, but it's another to say that an actor is so ugly, for example, that he shouldn't be allowed to be in the profession. There's very little you can do as a performer to counteract a criticism like that!"

But Mars does feel that there is an important place for criticism when it is handled well.

"Unfortunately criticism has, I'm afraid, become irrevocably linked with selling newspapers and magazines to the degree that it no longer functions in the classical style. The classical style is based on being a very smart guy who knows a lot about the history of the various genres that you're critiquing. I took literary criticism in college. There's a vast body of literary criticism which is fascinating. The more you get into it, the more you know about literature, the more you wish that criticism was more like that and less like what it has become."

(Yes, critics have a real stake in acting — Evile)

A FULL RANGE OF CHARACTERIZATION

By being a character actor, Kenneth Mars is able to tackle a wide spectrum of roles. His parts for Mel Brooks and his appearance as a menacing tooth fairy are just a few.

"I've done Mel Brooks pictures and very serious pictures, like *Daughters of Character*, Frank Gilroy's picture with Shirley MacLaine, and everything in between. Wacky styles and realistic styles. Being able to act in different styles is part of an actor's equipment, or should be.

"I like doing things like *Twilight Zone*. I like coming on a show, doing a role and leaving. I like to have time to myself—time to write, time to read. Not that I wouldn't do a series if the right one came along," Mars quickly points out. "It's such hard work on a series. The idea of coming in at 7 am and leaving at 7 or 8 pm—that's your life!

"I like to do anything new and challenging. I don't get too many opportunities to do that on television because there's so much of an emphasis on playing safe. A show like *The Twilight Zone* gives one an opportunity to do the kinds of things that you wouldn't get the chance to do on episodic shows."





MONSTERAMA

LIONEL ATWILL: MASTER OF MENACE

BY MARK SIELSKI



LIONEL ATWILL IS THE MAD DOCTOR OF MARKET STREET WHO RULES AN ISLAND WITH HIS POWER OF LIFE—CLAIRE ODDO CO-STARS.

Lionel Atwill had a relatively brief (1932-47), but quite distinguished place in cinema history. His profound characterizations have been unforgettable to monsterdom. A recent Universal Studios revival of Sherlock Holmes (attended by several **MONSTERLAND** readers) thrilled the audience with Dr. Moriarity (Atwill) and his nearly successful attempts at liquidating Mr. Holmes (stylishly played by Basil Rathbone) in the series second entry, *Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon* (1942). One astute ML reader quipped, "over a period of four decades, it is a credit to him (Atwill) that many of today's mad villain roles are still secondary to his portrayals during the golden age of horror". (You might say he helped keep the undead "alive" — EWa)

Atwill's career spanned a multitude of films (nearly 80) in several genres: horror, mystery, adventure, drama, as well as comedy. The "red herring" roles subjected him to the hilarious highinks of comedy teams such as the Ritz Bros. in *The Sells* (1939), Abbott and Costello in *Ferdinand My Son* (1941) and Brown and Carney in *Series at Work* (1946). Although Atwill proved to be a more-than-adequate straightman, his mad villain/doctor/scientist roles are those synonymous with his name. Several actors have approached his dramatic flare, but not one has ever consistently maintained it.

After several years as a stage actor, beginning in 1916 with Ibsen's *A Doll House*, Atwill made his first major film role

a memorable one. First National Pictures cast him as the lead in the delightfully eerie and atmospheric production of *Dr. X* (1932). Co-starring Fay Wray (soon to be world renowned in *King Kong*), Dr. X presented '30s filmgoers with cannibalistic murders under the light of the full moon, as well as some chilling investigative work complete with a horrifying and shocking climax.

BATS

The following year (1933), Majestic Pictures teamed Atwill, Wray, Dwight Frye and Melvyn (The Old Dark House) Douglas in *The Vampire Bat*, apparently to capitalize on the financial success of *Dracula* (1931). Atwill, as Dr. Otto von Nieman, had his most ghoulish role in which he had the opportunity to steal bodies and subsequently drain them of their blood for experimental reasons. During the film's course, Nieman (Atwill) diverts suspicion from himself onto Herman Grieb (Frye), an innocent batkeeper. An irate and vengeful village mob (a prerequisite feature of all later Universal monster epics!) forms to obtain justice for the grisly murders. One curiosity of this independent production is that it was seemingly remade, or liberally borrowed from in PRC's *Devil Bat* (aka *Killer Bats*) in 1940, starring Bela Lugosi. (Ah, Bela, how I love you! — EWa)

That same year (1933) Warner Bros. gave Atwill his role in *Mystery of the Wax Museum*, in which he played the demented

LYONEL ATWILL RIVETS FAY WRAY WITH A PENETRATING GAZE!



sculptor, Ivan Igor. The film cast him with Fay Wray (now-first queen of horror) once again. This one would be their best fearful! The picture is not heralded as an all-time classic in some circles largely because *Mystery* is officially out of circulation, thus denying itself generations of film audiences. In the climactic scene, Miss Wray strikes repeatedly at her captor's (Atwill) face, breaking the wax mask concealing Ivan Igor's hideous disfigurement. The shocking unmasking may be the equal of Mary Philbin's revealing of Chaney Sr. in 1925's *Phantom of the Opera*. Several years ago, Fay commented that she had "no idea what to expect under the mask except that it would be a little scary". Much to her chagrin however, the face of Ivan Igor was beyond her expectations, thus causing the second greatest scream heard round the world!

Mystery provided Atwill his most fulfilling role, one which allowed his histrionics to work to perfection. It also became the first urban horror film creating inescapable terror for audiences. The dialogue approaches perfection when he enunciate Fay Wray in restraints and emphatically states: "Think of it my dear, I offer you eternal life." He intends to

convert her to a live wax figure of Marie Antoinette. Apparently, the blasphemous qualities of this scene were lifted from Colin Clive in *Frankenstein*, "now I know what it feels like to be God!"

SINKING HIS TEETH

Both *Mystery* and *Dr. X* were ironically misplaced/destroyed and presumed lost along with a generationful of Hollywood's horrors—noteable inclusions being *Mad Love* (since found) and *London After Midnight* (still lost). During their respective revivals, critics have had mixed reactions, obviously a result of overanticipation. As for the typecasting which followed after *Mystery*, Atwill once commented, "as long as I've got something definitive and picturesque that I can get my teeth into and have a field day with, I'll enjoy myself."

After a series of cursory roles (exceptions being *The Man Who Reclaimed His Head* (1935) with Claude Rains and *The Mark of the Vampire* (1935) with Bela Lugosi and Lionel Barrymore), Atwill appeared in *The Son of Frankenstein* (1930). With exquisite



ATWILL AS ANOTHER MAD DOCTOR IN THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN

aplomb and diction, he delivered See's most spine-tingling lines to an all-star cast (Karloff, Rathbone, Lugosi) as Inspector Krogh. Memorable dialogue moments occur when Krogh (Atwill) converses with Frankenstein's son (Rathbone) concerning the loss of an arm... "I was a child at the time...the monster escaped and was ravaging the countryside...One night he burst into our house...my father fired two shots at the brute...he then grabbed me by the arms and tore it out by the roots..." Atwill's delivery created far greater terror among viewers than does the graphic violence of modern slasher films. (The new slice-and-dice does tend to produce men of parts, though — *Evile*)

Atwill returned as Dr. Bohmer in *The Ghost of Frankenstein* (1942) who unwisely transplants the brain of Ygor (Lugosi) into the Monster (Chaney). (This proved to be a poor script decision on the part of Universal regarding Lugosi. Although the latter seems ungrudgingly affixed to the Dracula role, albeit its importance, Ygor is perhaps his best.) In *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man* (1943), Atwill plays the town mayor, only to return to the Inspector role in *The House of Frankenstein* (1944) and *The House of Dracula* (1945).

Atwill in the weird classic MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM.





His best mad scientist appears in *Man Made Monster* (1941). Dr. Regas, an electrobiologist who experiments on horror newcomer Lon Chaney Jr., for his immunity against electrical shock. Chaney becomes a slave of Dr. Regas, murdering at the mad doctor's will. Fortunately for society, Regas and his experiment are destroyed. An injustice in *Man Made Monster's* script is that it didn't provide adequate medical claims for the animated experiments, unlike such Karloff films as *The Devil Commands* (1941), *The Invisible Ray* (1936) and *The Men Who Changed His Mind* (1936). Atwill was better suited to play the berserk scientist than was the rather slow-keyed Karloff.

Man Made Monster marked Atwill's last truly great role. Some of his remaining feature films (aside from the Frankenstein series which were in a supporting capacity only) include *The Strange Case of Dr. RX* (1942), *Night Monster* (1942), *Mad Doctor of Market Street* (1942) and *Fog Island* (1945). These were strictly B's. During production of one of Universal's last serials, *Lost City of the Jungle*, Atwill was stricken with pneumonia and regrettably unable to recover. He quietly passed away on April 26, 1946 (b. March 1, 1885).

One evening on late night television, or perhaps in some forgotten revival house, a young fan will hear for the first time, or maybe a longtime genre fan will hear for the umpteenth time—"MAD? Of course I'm Mad! So were Galileo, Archimedes, Newton, Pasteur and all those others who dared to dream." And we will all dream, dream of a time when Lionel Atwill crested fentafilm villains that will always find a home in MONSTERLAND!

METROPOLIS

THE HOUSE THAT DRIPPED BLOOD ON JON PERTWEE

BY ERIC HOFFMAN



JON PERTWEE VAMPS THE VAMPIRE AS A CHRISTOPHER LEE CLONE!

Jon Pertwee is a familiar figure to fans of British TV fantasy. The tall, distinguished actor-comedian has appeared in a wide variety of roles, usually playing "eccentric" characters. His most famous parts are his portrayal of the 3rd incarnation of Doctor Who and, more recently, the rascally scarecrow, *Worzel Gummidge*.

While working with Jon at a Who convention held in Austin, Texas during April, 1985, I took the opportunity to get some memories and comments from the versatile performer about making his section of *The House That Dripped Blood* (Jon and Eric — Two of my favorite things — I think I'll let them chat uninterrupted — *Evil!*)

Eric L. Hoffman: Jon, the section of *House That Dripped Blood* in which you appeared, "The Cloak," seems to have become the most popular and best-known segment of the film. Could you tell us something about it?

Jon Pertwee: Yes, well...the director (Peter Duffell) is a friend of mine...and we had a talk one day about the picture. We decided that that particular section, instead of playing it straight, we'd send it up, go for laughs, which, of course, you normally don't do in a horror movie.

And so, we went with this, right from the word "GO": I made my appearance as a sort of send-up character with the wide-brimmed hat, and the silver-knobbed cane, and Ingrid Pitt; as you remember, she was smoking a cigarette in a long-holder. So it was all sort of send-up in style and right from that very first shot when we're sitting in the open car...this sort of set the scene as to how we were going to play it.

It turned out that it worked very well. I remember going

to the first day's rushes and hearing the projectionists laugh a lot and that's a good sign when the projectionists laugh!

EH: They're pretty harsh critics?

JP: Very harsh critics indeed! And so we thought we were on to something good. It eventually built up and up and up and the last scene was riotous. Now, you never saw the last scene the way it was shot because...I'll tell you what happened. The last scene was a wild sequence after I had been turned into a vampire by Ingrid Pitt's character. I came out of the coffin and start chasing the police inspector, who was played by John Bennett. What we originally did, we had a long chase sequence, sort of an undercranked section, in which I went to bite his throat and missed and finished up with his tie in my mouth and so on.

However, when we were three-quarters of the way through the picture the producer saw the rushes and he went absolutely spere! He was furious and he said, "What the hell are you trying to do to my picture? I'm making a horror movie, not a comedy!"

And we said, "Well, all the other sections are played pretty straight. We thought we'd send up this section." He said, "No, it's dreadful and I can't stand it! We have to cut it out."

So from that moment onwards, we had to change the style of the picture and as a result, my section of the movie is a bit mixed. But, of course, as I explained to him, you can't alter it because the very, very first shot got for laughs and so, of course...Well, what he successfully did, unfortunately, was to make the section less funny than it actually would have been. It was still, however, and everybody



NOW, GO I HAVE THE COAT FOR YOU...

laughed at it! And I think that's why it was the most popular section of a very popular film.

EH: When you were shooting your part of the film, did you get together with Robert Bloch, the man who wrote the picture, for idea sessions or the like?

JP: No, I don't think so. I think I did all that with the director, Peter Duffell. No, I don't think Robert Bloch was on the floor when we were shooting it.

EH: There's one moment in the picture when you're on the horror movie set for the first time and you're criticizing it and actually punching holes in it...

JP: ...That's right, punching the holes with the cane...

EH: You must have had fun doing that... There's a line in that sequence where you're complaining about the film your character's doing not being like the old classics and you make that crack which has to be referring to Christopher Lee.

JP: Well, it was... It was a very funny thing, because the whole of my portrayal was supposed to be a send-up, or satire, of Christopher Lee. And Chris, as you know, was in one of the other stories, and he saw the picture... we all went over to the premiere... and he said, "My god, that was funny! I really enjoyed that. Who—did you base it [Jon's character] on anybody?" And I thought he was putting me on. I thought he must have seen through it and he hadn't any idea at all! I said, "No, no, no, absolutely not." And he

didn't see that it was plainly him, but the fans obviously could figure it out.

EH: Well, there were some things that sort of gave it away... all those little references... your character's being an expert on the occult, on fine foods, cooking... and things like that, at least the expertise on the occult and stuff—which is what Lee is supposed to be.

JP: He's an extraordinary man, Christopher Lee. He frequently confounds you with what he's able to do when you think that he's putting you on. I remember one time when I met him on the street outside my house and we started to talk and he was talking about being in Germany and making films over there, and I thought to myself, "Well, hang on a minute" and I said, "Oh, well, how do you get on with the language?" And he said, "Oh, I speak German fluently." And I thought to myself, "That's good, because I'm, my wife, is coming out in a minute and she's German and we're going to hold him on his own petard!" and then she came out of the house and I said, "Oh, darling, you don't remember Christopher Lee, do you?" She said, "No, I don't think so." And Chris said, "Ah, Guten tag, gnadige Frau," or something like that and starting to speak to her in fluent German! She said it was absolutely impeccable.

EH: There was also the sequence where you wind up trying on the clock around midnight and you start rewinding. Didn't you once say something about you wan-

ting to have the landing come out differently?

JP: Oh, yes, this was when the clock struck, and the fangs suddenly grow in my mouth and I levitated, wearing that cloak. That was an idea of mine I suggested it to Peter, our director and he said he thought it was an excellent idea so they put me on a Kirby flying bally(?) wire and took me up to the roof, and then when the clock stopped striking twelve, all the magic went and I came plummeting to earth. But the idea was that I was going to come down about three quarters of the way before they released the catch on my harness. Unfortunately, they released me a bit early and I fell—I was sort of spread-eagled like a starfish—and fell flat on my face from about 12 feet! I wasn't expecting it, though, when I was released, so I didn't hurt myself.

EH: From the way you talk about the film, I guess you could say that *The Hound That Stripped Blood* is one of those you have a certain fondness for?

JP: Oh, very much so, particularly because it was my first meeting with my very dear and good friend Geoffrey Bayldon. If you remember, he played the weird costume shop owner, Von Harbin, who sold me the cape. He turned out to be a real vampire in the story, you'll remember. We became very good friends and, of course, he later on became the Crowman and worked with me in *Werzal Gamselidge*.

EH: Your leading lady was somebody our readers are

familiar with from her work in thrillers, including one from Hemmer, Ingrid Pitt. What was she like to work with?

JP: Unpredictable. She's an unpredictable lady. I don't quite know where she comes from originally. She's very fiery, sort of a letter-day Lupe Velez. We got along splendidly apart from that one singularly unfortunate moment when she had to haul off and hit me, just after I had bitten her in the neck while we're shooting that scene in the movie.

I'd made sure that she was smoking the cigarette with that long holder in the hand that wasn't covered with extremely large rings in claw settings and we rehearsed it very carefully. But she was a slightly nervous girl and when it came to the take, she'd switched and gotten the cigarette and cigarette holder in the wrong hand and hauled off and hit with the hand that had all the rings—and poleaxed me! I wasn't too pleased with that one.

EH: The look on your face just sort of shows it on the screen. She seemed to be going along with the fun, sort of joining in with the spirit of the whole madness.

JP: Oh yes, very much so. Yes, she was a very easy girl to work with. She later worked with me in one of the *Detective Who* stories, "*The Time Monster*", as the Queen of Atlantis.

EH: Thank you very much, Jon, for taking the time.

JP: Not at all, a great pleasure.

(Jon has the right approach to terror—enjoy! - Evlla)



PUTTING THE BITE ON BEAUTIFUL INGRID PITTI

BIEHN AND THE ALIENS

BY JAMES VAN HISE



SIGOURNEY WEAVER RETURNS AS WARRANT OFFICER RIPLEY, TO JOIN WITH HICKS (MICHAEL BIEHN), MUDSON (BILL PAXTON) AND NEWT (CARRIE HENN) IN SEARCH OF ALIENS!

In *The Terminator*, Michael Biehn battled an unstoppable machine. In *Aliens* he's up against even bigger game—creatures romping through the sequel to the 1979 megahit, *Alien*.

Ever since *Alien* hit it big in the summer of '79, 20th Century Fox has been trying to come up with workable ideas for a sequel. Many writers, including Theodore Sturgeon, were approached but nothing ever worked out. It seemed as though the possibility of a sequel was growing dimmer and dimmer (especially in light of how many films were gleefully ripping-off the style and substance of the film, reducing the potential impact of any possible sequel).

In October, 1984, a modestly-budgeted film called *The Terminator* was released. It was an instant hit and it's writer/director, James Cameron, became a hot property in Hollywood. He could pick and choose what he wanted to do. What he wanted was to write and direct a sequel to *Alien*.

Aliens (not *Alien II*) picks up with Ripley (once again played by Sigourney Weaver) being found in suspended animation in her lifeboat shuttle. When she explains how her mining craft was blown up and, why, no one believes her. Finally plans are made to return to the planet where she claims they found the deadly alien lifeform.

"My character's name is Hicks."

Biehn explains. "He's a corporal in the Marine Corps, one of a group of Marines who have dealings with the aliens. We don't come into the movie until about 25 minutes into it. During those 25 minutes you're set up to think that other things are happening. Ripley has been taken back to the planet she described, with a contingent of Marines to protect her, and I'm one of them. There's a dozen characters that go back to the planet with her."

THE LURKING FEAR

Biehn's first role in a sci fi film was when he played Kyle Reese in *The Terminator*. Before that he was known for playing menacing heavies such as the psychotic fan in the Lauren Bacall vehicle, *The Fan*, or the racist in *The Lords of Discipline*. He had a guest spot on *Mill Street Blues* as rookie patrolman, Butts. In the part (during the '84-'85 season), he drives a fellow officer to suicide. The director asked him to enlist for *Aliens* in October '85, a month before shooting on the film was set to begin. They needed a few good men—and women.

"I was in England for 3½ months," he recalls. "They shot through January and even a little bit into February doing process shots. Some of the actors were still there when I left. Sigourney was still there. All together it was about a 16 week shoot."

While *The Terminator* was a 12 week shoot, *Aliens* was much more complicated.

"It was the most complicated shoot I've ever worked on," says Biehn, "because of the logistics. The designs Jim Cameron came up with were very good but you had to take your time getting through them. But I don't think that it was anything they didn't expect. The wardrobe alone would add time.

The wardrobe consisted of battle armor containing working audio and video equipment, quite different from the strange spacesuits seen in the original *Alien*.

"These aren't spacesuits, really," Biehn explains. "It was a combination fatigue and armor. There was video equipment built into the helmet and microphones. There were also various instruments to track the aliens."

Also adding complications were the on-set mechanical creature effects.

"When you're dealing with aliens it's hard to make things appear real," the actor continues. "A lot of the things in this movie were mechanical and remote controlled. Things have a tendency to go wrong when you're working with mechanisms. The person who's responsible for the aliens in this movie is Stan Winston.

"Most of the reviews I read of *The Terminator* point out Stan Winston's

work and liken it to Ray Harryhausen. Stan did the aliens for this new film—he's real talented. Jim's (Cameron) a perfectionist. He wants everything to look exactly right and usually gets it. It takes time and can be pretty difficult, though."

THE RETURN OF RIPLEY

For a time there was question whether Sigourney Weaver would return. She is back, indicating that she didn't feel that the script was just a rehash of the story that first brought her to prominence. Michael Blehn enjoyed working with the actress. He found that she was much different than what his image had been of her.

"A lot of people have a perception of Sigourney that might not be totally accurate. I did. She was a lot of fun, kind of one of the guys. Sigourney was cutting up all the time funny, slapping everyone on the back, pulling practical jokes. A lot of fun to be around. She is a sweet lady, very professional and easy to work with. Everyone enjoyed working with her."

In *The Making of Ghostbusters*, a poem written by the actress for a cast party was published. Blehn informs that she also wrote a poem for a Christmas party which took place during the winter shoot on *Aliens*.

"It was a 12 Days of *Aliens* Christmas which was very funny. It's one of those things she does as a morale booster. It was such a physically draining shoot that anything which could pick up spirits was a good thing. She got all of the actors together. We learned the lines to it and sang it to the crew."

Although *Aliens* involves more characters than the original film, Ripley is still the one around whom the story revolves.

"It's Sigourney's movie, and she's the star of it," says Blehn. "Other than Sigourney's role, it's an ensemble piece. All of the other actors are of about the same prominence. There's myself, an actor named Bill Paxton, Paul Rizer, Lance Henriksen and others. Half of the actors were played by British Equity and half were brought over from America."

Blehn is not the only actor in *Aliens* who has worked with director Cameron before. There are several.

"Bill Paxton worked with Jim in the past," Blehn reveals. "They used to work together building sets and things like that. Then Bill became an actor and has worked his way up. Jim used him

as one of the punks at the beginning of *The Terminator*. Lance Henriksen was also in *The Terminator*, as Paul Winfield's sidekick. Lance was also in Jim's first movie, *Flashback*."

Jim likes to use the same people because he has an idea of what he can expect from them.

"Jim Cameron is an immensely talented director. His style and designs for this movie are really amazing. *Aliens* will make his first film look like it was his first film. People will realize just what Jim Cameron can do after they see this movie. If people have seen *Alien* and *The Terminator*, they're really going to love this movie."

FILMING THE TERMINATOR

Blehn first worked with Jim Cameron on *The Terminator*. Until *Alien* that was his most demanding and exciting role. But unlike *Alien*, which reportedly has an "open" budget (meaning Fox would like it to come in under \$20 million, but they're willing to let it exceed that), *The Terminator* was very cost conscious. To hold the budget down, it was shot in and around Los Angeles, including at some of the downtown areas seen on *Hill Street Blues*.

"The future was shot at Bethlehem Steel," Blehn states. "It had gone out of business and was totally unoccupied. They used a street of buildings there for the police station. But most of the film was shot around downtown L.A. The bar was set up downtown as was the other street stuff."

"They shot a little at Griffith Park for the beginning when Arnold comes in." This is the memorable scene with the growling, naked Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Even though *The Terminator* is a hard-driving action picture, actors are not normally involved in the real pyrotechnics displayed on film.

"Any time there was fire and explosions, I wasn't around," says Blehn. "Most of my stunts were done by a young guy by the name of Tom Hart."

One of the most violent scenes in the film was the massacre in the bar which began the first of several sustained chases.

"There's one stunt where I'm being chased through an alley. The stunt man, Tom Hart, runs and the car comes in and hits him and he hits the windshield. They cut there and I get to jump on top of the windshield. Then they do another cut and I roll off down onto the ground and take off running again."

Then there was the scene when Reese seemingly drops out of the sky.

"One of the really tough stunts to do was when Reese's body hits the cement from out of nowhere. It really doesn't look like anything special but this guy was about five feet off the ground and completely sideways. They had two ladders with a board between them. He had to jump off and land in the street, which I'd never have done. It looks like nothing but it was a pretty tough stunt. I know it would hurt. The street doesn't give very much. I think that Arnold did more of his stunts than I did of mine."

"I worked with him in the bar shoot-out, but that's not really like two actors working on a scene. It's just an action sequence where we never have any eye contact other than when I'm blowing him away with my shotgun. I really couldn't tell you what it was like working with him as an actor. He's fun to be around and obviously a lot more intelligent than people give him credit for."

ALIENS & ACTION

While following in the footsteps of Ripley Scott is a tall order, Michael Blehn feels that Jim Cameron has pulled it off in high style. *Alien* is different enough from Scott's *Alien* to be interesting.

"To me *Alien* is a movie where fear was built on suspense," Blehn observes in contrasting the original film with the sequel. "They spent a lot of time in that movie looking for the alien, so it moved at a slower pace. As they searched for the alien, tension built."

"*Alien* is more than suspense. We find the alien and deal with them, so it's going to be scary but in a little bit different sense. It's going to be faster than *Alien* but still every bit as scary."

In the sequel, we learn more about the aliens than we did in the first film.

"That's another of the things that impressed me about Jim's script. He was true to the first film and you learn more about the aliens here. He's able to use the information in the first one and build off of that. It holds up very well to the original. Here you learn about the aliens, where they come from and why."

"I've been in a few movies and I'm a bit jaded. I don't go running around saying that this is going to be great or that is going to be great," Blehn concludes. "But when I see what Jim has done with this script, I think people are going to enjoy it."

MONSTER MA LAND



The Monsterland Makeup Contest was a howling success as readers displayed their gruesome skills from coast to coast!

The dozens of entries were turned over to makeupmeister John Carl Buechler who selected the top five entries, which was no small feat in itself!

Following John's narrowing the entries down to five finalists, ye editor picked them up to deliver to Joe Dante. When he handed over the five finalists, John confided that he believed he knew which one the winner would be and pointed it out. Without mentioning that to Joe, I handed him the finalists for him to go through. Without hesitation he chose the entry by Joey Castro. It was so weird that Joe laughed out loud when he saw it. "That's like the sort of thing that Rob Bottin used to do when he was a kid!" Joe exclaimed. He was very enthusiastic over the choice of the winner.

When Joey Castro was informed by phone that he was the winner, he was so excited he said, "You've made my week! No! You've made my life!" How else can one feel when Joe Dante pronounces your work to be the best!

Coming up soon will be the announcement of another new contest, not a makeup contest this time, but one which will employ other skills guaranteed to reveal the talented filmmakers of tomorrow!

At the top of the page, reading from right to left, are samples of the work submitted by other Monsterland readers, thus giving you an good idea of just how difficult it was to choose a single winner! Top right, Daniel P. Nagle of Columbia, Maryland. Top, center, Jason Ruhland of Crytal, Minn. recreates the werewolf from The Howling. Top, left, makeup by Shane Atkinson (on subject Linda McCain) from Jackson, Mississippi. Center, left, is Matt Chernov from Cranston, Rhode Island and bottom, left, is Ron Cannata of Metairie, Louisiana.

KEUP CONTEST

THE WINNERS!



RUSS TURN



KEVIN WILLIAMS



JOE ADAMS

And the winner is **Joey Castro** of Helotes, Texas who will be flown out to Hollywood in June where he will meet Joe Dante, John Buechler, Mr. Monster himself—Forest J. Ackerman, as well as other filmmaking celebrities. Joey will visit John Buechler's makeup studios, take the Universal Studios Tour (which features the brand new King Kong attraction), tour the legendary Ackermansion plus Joe Dante has invited Joey to dine with him and mekeup whiz Rob Bottin so they can share their secrets! Hollywood is the land of dreams and a lot of dreams will be coming true for Joey this June—Thanks to *Monsterland*!

Joey Castro is 15 and is a big fan of the work of Joe Dante and Rob Bottin, as well as of the other super-talented makeup meisters in Hollywood today. He was as surprised that he won as anyone could be, but the best is yet to come for Joey!

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CREATURE FEATURE

**BARNABAS COLLINS:
A VAMPIRE IN SPITE OF HIMSELF!!!**

*Dark
Shadows*





He was a vampire brought in to give new life to the anemic plotlines of a segging soap opera. His character, originally conceived as being temporary, became the centerpiece around which all other subplots revolved. He became the vampire who rescued *Dark Shadows*.

Barnabas was found in a secret room of the Collins family mausoleum when a shifty servant, in search of legendary jewels believed buried with Collins ancestors, stumbled on the long forgotten room. There he found a coffin which was chained shut. Breaking the locks, he at last opened the casket, only to be greeted by a hand from its occupant grabbing him by the throat. From that day forward, Willie Loomis (played by John Karlen, now seen as Harvey on *Cagney & Lacey*), was the helpless servant of Barnabas.

NEW BEGINNING

At first Barnabas was the master of villainy. Pretending to be a descendant of the original Barnabas, he claimed to have just arrived from England. Although the Collins family professed ignorance of having any living relatives there, his uncanny resemblance to the 200-year-old portrait of the original Barnabas, now prominently displayed in the foyer of Collinwood, couldn't help but support the man's claim. In keeping with their sense of family, Elizabeth Collins allowed Barnabas to live in the long-unoccupied Old House, which had been the home of Barnabas two centuries before.

Behind these walls, far from the eye and ear of the

curious, Barnabas went about his private business. With Willie to protect him by day, Barnabas adopted the guise of a businessman who was gone all day and only came calling at night. His coffin was moved from the secret room to the basement of the old house.

Barnabas was ruthless in his existence and more than once committed murder to protect his secret and dispose of adversaries who proved to be genuinely threatening. Although Barnabas probably could have lived securely despite his occasional forays into Collinsport to attack young women, he became brazen.

Upon meeting Maggie Evans, Barnabas was struck by her resemblance to his long lost love, Josette. With Willie's help, he kidnapped Maggie and hypnotized her into believing that she was indeed Josette. But this finally wore off and she became just a tormented woman held captive in a cell in the basement of the Old House. Barnabas became furious when it became obvious that he couldn't get her to bend to his will. This was compounded by the fact that a strange little girl began appearing to Maggie—the ghost of Barnabas' long lost sister, Sara. It was Sara who helped Maggie escape Barnabas and protected her thereafter.

When Maggie was found, she was hysterical and suffering from a memory lapse regarding the entire ordeal. A doctor whose car she was put in, one Julia Hoffman, began to piece together clues and finally confronted Barnabas with what she knew about him. But she wasn't after his life, but to make him her patient! Since Barnabas secretly hated his



THE DARK SHADOWS CLASH



GET OUT OF MY CEMETERY!

vampire side, he went along with the arrangement, but he also made it clear that should she ever betray him, he'd kill her. It was not uncommon for him to angrily make his point to Julia in an argument by grabbing her by the throat and threatening to destroy her on the spot.

The reason Julia put up with it was that she was attracted to Barnabas, although he scorned any such attentions on her part.

SUPERNATURAL REVENGE

Julia Hoffman (Grayson Hall) began a series of injections designed to treat Barnabas's condition medically. Although the treatments seemed to be having gradual success, he demanded that the process be sped up. This was because he had become infatuated with Vickie Winters, the governess at Collinwood, but did not want to press his intentions unless he could do so without danger of exposing his secret. Were he normal, that problem would be solved. But his impatience nearly cost him everything when the increased doses caused him to regress to the actual physical state of a man over two centuries old. Although Dr. Hoffman was able to reverse the effect, he refused to have anything more to do with her experiments and sent her away. But she still managed to insinuate herself into his life and even hid her diary with an attorney so that it would be read and expose Barnabas's secrets should he kill the doctor. It was the only hold over him she could maintain and her jealousy over his interest in Vickie was ill-disguised.

But then the gradual changing of the character began in which we learned the secret origin of his vampirism and how he was the victim of a witch.

In the year 1789, Josette DuPres arrived from Martinique with her handmaiden, Angelique. Because Angelique secretly loved Barnabas, she bewitched both Josette and Barnabas's cousin so that the two would become lovers and secretly marry before anyone could stop them. Heartbroken, Barnabas challenged his cousin to a duel and killed him. He retreated to the old house. There Angelique tricked Barnabas into agreeing to marry her should she be able to cure the near death illness of his young sister, Sara. But after they were married, Barnabas discovered that Angelique was a witch who had actually caused his sister's torment to begin with as well as other calamities. When Barnabas confronted her and vowed his hatred, Angelique began to bring destruction on the rest of the Collins family. Finally Barnabas confronted Angelique and shot her. Believing she was mortally wounded, she cursed him, whereupon he was attacked by a bat. Barnabas fell deathly ill and succumbed. But Angelique, now recovered, realized what would happen and went to his tomb to prevent his return from the dead. Instead, Barnabas attacked Angelique and killed her. Using a faithful servant, Ben Stokes (Thayer David), Barnabas led a secret existence until discovered by his father. When his mother learned the truth, it was the final family calamity for her. Shocked, she took her own life. When attempts to cure Barnabas failed, his father attempted to shoot him—but with no effect. Finally, during the day, his father had Barnabas chained in his coffin, and locked in a secret family crypt.

For a time Barnabas was able to walk like a man when, following an auto accident, he awoke in a hospital. There a doctor demonstrated to Barnabas by pulling aside a curtain that it was mid-day. Barnabas screamed in horror, but found





that he was unharmed. The doctor had analyzed Barnabas' peculiar blood and treated him with an experimental serum which temporarily cured him. But when the vampire began to feel his old urges calling to him to seek out the blood of life, he'd need another injection.

But Angelique would not be denied her vengeance. She returned from the spirit realm to bedevil Barnabas again, and undo his chance for a normal life.

This is when Barnabas began to be more humane, as well as human. His heinous deeds were rebuked by the ghost of Sara who, after evading him and taunting him with hints of her presence, finally confronted him and stated that she had deliberately been avoiding him because of the awful things he'd been doing. Barnabas was terribly hurt by her words, particularly when she vanished and left him alone, vowing never to see him again unless he changed his ways. This is when we finally saw the vampire as a man.

When his origin was related in detail, it was clear that Barnabas had been a kind, gentle man. But when transformed into a vampire, his unearthly thirsts and inhuman powers robbed him of his human soul.

BARBABAS SPEAKS

Jonathan Frid, the only actor ever to play Barnabas Collins, describes the character in the terms in which he sees him, then and now. "Barnabas was the first empathetic vampire. He was a man with an addiction who drank blood only to survive. The audience felt pity for

him...I've always felt that there was a love/hate relationship between the audience (particularly children) and Barnabas. In some ways he was looked upon as a darker version of Santa Claus—friendly enough that you were intrigued by him, yet mysterious enough that he frightened you.

"Actually, I think Barnabas is very much like everything I've played before. I played Macbeth once and there's a great similarity between Macbeth and Barnabas. Certainly Macbeth is built on guilt, just as Barnabas was.

"I love to play horror for horror's sake," Frid continues. "Inner horror, I mean. I never thought I created fear with the fang business of Barnabas. I always felt foolish doing that part of it. The horror part I liked was the lie. There's nothing more horrible than looking someone in the eye who's telling you a lie and you know it. Somehow that scares me more than anything else. That pretense was something the actor playing Barnabas had to remember all the time. He got the lust for blood every once in a while, but always what preyed on his mind was the lie. And of course it played right into my lie as an actor. I was lying that I was calm and comfortable just as Barnabas was lying that he was the calm and comfortable cousin from England. He wasn't at all. He was a sick, unbelievable creep that the world didn't know about."

But Barnabas became more than that to his fans. His struggle with his secret urges and his guilt over what powers beyond his control forced him to do to survive made him much more than the average night stalker in search of a bloody delicacy. It made him a vampire attempting to hold on to his fleeting humanity.



Monsterland Reveals the secrets of the upcoming STAR TREK IV

BY JAMES VAN HISE

Colossal! Stupendous! Twenty years in the making! These words could easily be used to describe the ongoing phenomenon of *Star Trek*.

This Christmas the adventure continues with *Star Trek IV*. Originally slated for a summer '85 release, script problems delayed the start of the Paramount picture. The team hired to script the project turned in a screenplay which was deemed unacceptable. Nicholas Meyer and Harve Bennett then quickly collaborated on a new story which allowed the picture to start shooting in late February. The film was also briefly held up when the planned \$32 million budget was scaled down to \$25 million by Paramount. This is several million more than *Star Trek III* cost!

The early part of the film deals with Kirk's crimes against the Federation. The Court Martial sequence is brief because there were clearly mitigating factors, not the least of which is Kirk's rescue of Mr. Spock and the capture of a Klingon bird-of-prey. Spock's father, Sarek, comes forward to forcefully speak on Kirk's behalf.

Returning to reprise her role of Amanda, Spock's mother, is Jane Wyatt. Many regretted her absence from the third film since Spock's father played such a crucial part.

Other old friends are also back, including Janice Rand (briefly glimpsed in *Star Trek III*) as Chief Rand. Reportedly, though, her role in the fourth film will not be very large.

In a more important part will be Majel Barrett Roddenberry as Christine Chapel, a character not seen since *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*. She will be in charge of medical teams organized to deal with a catastrophe being visited on Earth by a space menace.

Kirk and company are chosen to deal with the terror, requiring a journey back in time to 20th century San Francisco to search out secrets to deal with the 23rd century menace. The secrets involve whales, which are apparently extinct in the world of the future.

Kirk—true to character!—becomes infatuated with a lady scientist he meets in that time period. This satisfies William Shatner's stated desire to have Kirk romantically involved with someone again, a point he made at a press conference for the opening of *Star Trek III*. It seems Shatner just loves to do those romantic scenes!

The *Enterprise* is seen in *Star Trek IV*—the 20th century version that is! While in the past—our present—the crew splits up into three teams, one of which slips aboard the aircraft carrier *Enterprise* (filming was actually done on the *Ranger* in San Diego). One scene features Chekov being chased across the huge deck of the mammoth ship.

Although the existing major unresolved plotlines will be tied up in *Star Trek IV*, new hints of things to come will be dropped. There may well be a galactic war brewing with Romulans and Klingons taking on the Federation. (What about the Orpeneans and their enforced peace ("Errend of Mercy")? We'll see!) There is also a rumor that Seavik will put in for a nine month medical leave of absence. I wonder what that could mean?

Since this is the 20th anniversary year of *Star Trek*, special plans are in store, including from **MONSTERLAND**. (More on this next issue!—Evlis)

The following is the text of the *Star Trek IV* teaser which was shown to theatre owners shortly before filming began on the fourth *Star Trek* feature.

Let's set the scene. Imagine a Hawaiian shirt-bedecked pair sitting together on board an airliner, obviously beginning a vacation. The two are William Shatner and Leonard Nimoy. Sound like a Western Airlines commercial? Exactly!

Leonard Nimoy: Somebody just asked me why I wasn't flying the plane.

William Shatner: And you said?

Nimoy: I'm not the captain, I'm the director.

Shatner: You mean this isn't just another airline commercial?

Nimoy: Oh no...we're on our way to make *Star Trek IV*.

Shatner: Right now? We're on our way to make *Star Trek IV*?

Nimoy: We start shooting in a week.

Shatner: You're kidding! Did anybody tell the T.J. Hester people?

Nimoy: I talked to them.

Shatner: What did they say?

Nimoy: You're finished. You're through.

Shatner: No...wrapped! Wrapped!

Nimoy: Wrapped! Schmapped! You're finished!

Shatner: You gonna' direct?





WHAT DOES LIFE HAVE IN STORE FOR OUR MERRY STARSHIP CREW?



Nimoy: Yeah...you're gonna' star!
Shatner: I'm gonna' star?
Nimoy: Yeah!
Shatner: What are friends for?
Nimoy: That's right!
Shatner: Do I get a script?
Nimoy: Okay! (Nimoy takes out a thick script and hands it to Shatner)
Shatner: Oh Leonard...
Nimoy: Yeah...
Shatner: Big...
Nimoy: Yeah...
Shatner: Heavy...
Nimoy: Yeah...
Shatner: Green...
Nimoy: Yeah. This script has to be big, you know why?
Shatner: Why?
Nimoy: Twenty years we've been doing this...
Shatner: Yes.
Nimoy: 1966 is the twentieth anniversary of Star Trek.
Shatner: I am impressed! I can just taste what the promotion department...you know that wonderful promotion department?...is going to do with this.
Nimoy: Big stuff...big.
Shatner: Leonard, how's my part? (Shatner thumbs through the script).
Nimoy: It's about...uh...(Nimoy holds his thumb and forefinger a very small space apart and then reaches over and shuts the script)...uh, very nice, very nice (laughs) You have a great part, Bill, a great part. And me, too!
Shatner: You've got a part?
Nimoy: Yeah.
Shatner: You gonna' be in this thing?
Nimoy: Yeah, I'm in it.
Shatner: And you're gonna' direct it?
Nimoy: Yeah.
Shatner: I thought you lost your marbles in Star Trek III?
Nimoy: I got a few back! I got you on the right plane!
Shatner: Where are we going?
Nimoy: San Francisco.
Shatner: San Francisco? We're going to San Francisco?
Nimoy: Yeah.
Shatner: That's not really a 23rd century town.
Nimoy: Admiral, in Star Trek it's possible to leave the 23rd century.
Shatner: Oh, you sly Vulcan.
Nimoy: Yeah.
Shatner: Time travel?
Nimoy: That's right.
Shatner: You little cute Vulcan!
Nimoy: It is my considered opinion that after life and death and resurrection we should lighten up a little!
Shatner: Lighten up a little.
Nimoy: Yeah! (Shatner grabs Nimoy by the cheeks and they burst into giggles and laughter).

One last question could fairly be asked, Will Star Trek IV be a comedy as some information hinted? Certainly the first promo recounted above has fun with the notion. But, no. While there will be humorous scenes, when catastrophes befall Earth, no one will be laughing.

After twenty years, the human adventure continues!

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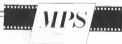
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JOHN CARPENTER'S BIG TROUBLE!!!

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BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA

BY JAMES VAN HISE



His films start trends and set standards. *Bark Star*, his feature debut, is a sci-fi satire so clever and inventive that nothing else like it has been seen, either before or since.

Halloween—his slasher-on-the-loose story—although largely bloodless and restrained, launched a spate of ultra-violent imitations.

More recent films include *Escape From New York*, *The Fog*, *The Thing*, *Christine* and *Starman* (the last garnering an Oscar nomination for Jeff Bridges).

Back for a return engagement with the fantastic, Carpenter describes his *Big Trouble in Little China* as "An action-adventure-comedy-kung-fu-ghost story-monster movie. There's no way that there's been a film like this!" He is quick to make that point. It seems there is another tale of Chinese mysticism presently in production at another studio which Carpenter was also offered.

"These things happen. I got offered *Big Trouble* first, and then *The Golden Child*. Originally *Golden Child* was a serious

film," Carpenter explains. "It was a Chinese mystical movie, and it was very sweet. But I'm bound to this film. They're having some problems with *Golden Child* because they don't know whether to make it funny or serious. The studio (Paramount) is frightened of doing a serious movie with Eddie Murphy, but I think they should do it straight."

Carpenter chose *Big Trouble in Little China* when 20th Century Fox offered the project. "I read the screenplay by W.D. Richter, who I went to film school with years ago. This was originally a western where a cowboy ambles into Chinatown and gets into trouble. Richter updated it. His reasoning was that *Rosemary's Baby* worked because it was a modern day film about ghosts, demons and the underworld. There were two other writers who wrote the western version. Instead of a truck driver, there was a cowboy. So you had to believe the western, then you had to believe Chinatown in the old west, then you had to believe the mythical

demons and heroes and villains. Richter said, 'Look, that's too much to believe. That's asking way too much.' And he's right! Westerns and fantasies don't mix well. So he went off and did the rewrite."

MAYNEM—UNDERGROUND

Big Trouble in Little China is adventure in the grand tradition starring Kurt Russell as Jack Burton, a reluctant hero. Unlike Indiana Jones who hunts the unusual, the lost and the unexplored—with an eye towards profit—Jack Burton is more down-to-earth. At the wheel of his semi-trailer rig, the *Pork Chop Express*, Burton hauls live pigs to market. He's a downhome boy who ballaves in bringing home the bacon, not confronting mystical Chinese monstrosities.

Jack's troubles begin when he accompanies his friend Wang Chi (Dennis Dun) to the airport to meet his future bride. She is kidnapped before their eyes by knife-wielding thugs. And off



they go in pursuit!

Jack and Wang Chi encounter such allies as Greco Law (Kim Cattrall), a local attorney, and Egg Shen (Victor Wong), an enigmatic tour bus driver who seems to know a lot about ancient Chinese magic, as well as Mergo Littenberger (Kata Burton), an eager but inexperienced reporter. Together they battle an outlandish array of anemias—Lightning, Thunder, Rain, The Wild Man, The Eye, The Sewer Monster, The Door Guards, Needles, Joe Lucky and One Ear. The strange creatures are under the command of the man behind the kidnapping, the centuries-old Lo Pen (James Hong). One of the most feared figures of Chinese legend, Lo Pan suffers in an eternal hell of fleshless existence to which he was consigned by the first emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang, over 2000 years ago. Since then, Lo Pan has been searching for a maiden with green eyes. Only through her will he be able to transcend his curse.

Jack Burton and his intrepid band must penetrate the legendary Seven Halls beneath Chinatown in order to affect the rescue of Wang Chi's bride. They must brave the Room of the Up-side-Down Hell, The Honorable Hall of

the Infernal Judge, The Mension of the Disloyal, The Hell of the River of Ashes, The Spirit Path, The Iron Basin and the Greet Arcade. If there is one certainty about this strange and terrifying underworld, it is that nothing is certain! Definitely not survival!

Big Trouble marks Carpenter's fourth collaboration with Kurt Russell. Other films they teamed on include *Escape From New York*, *This Is Elvis* and *The Thing*. Carpenter likes reteaming with the performer because "He's a terrific actor. He was attracted to this part and I needed someone with a comedic sense because a lot of the characters in this movie are very offbeat. They remind me of characters in *Bringing Up Baby* or *His Girl Friday*. Really nutty, Thirties kind of Howard Hawks people. They talk overlap and a mile a minute. There's a lot of strange dialogue...and yet you have to play it very seriously."

Describing how the story changed in updating, Carpenter notes, "The story of the villain remains almost intact. He's a man who's 2000 years old. He was in the court of the first emperor of China, cursed with being a ghost until he marries a girl with green eyes. Then he can become a man again. That's all he wants to do."

CHANGING STYLES

Although *Berk Star* was Carpenter's first film, he didn't achieve wide recognition and commercial success until *Halloween*. This was soon followed by *The Fog*. These movies, although horror films, were not explicit in their portrayals of violence. Instead, they used implied violence to make audiences believe they were seeing much more than was on the screen. For instance, Jamie Lee Curtis confronts the Shape in a long series of chases and fights, but no blood is shed. In *The Fog*, a character's eyes are put out by a ghost early in the film but we don't see the violence. We merely understand what has happened by the angles and sound effects, thus placing the full impact of the scene in our imaginations. When Carpenter made *The Thing*, he completely reversed the direction of his technique. But why?

"*Halloween* (the series opener) was all suggestion—nothing bloody about it," Carpenter observes, "so why do it again? I wanted you to believe that *The Thing* was real. I wanted to go for a creature that changed and really did tricks. Stephen King wrote a book,

Danse Macabre, in which he talks about horror films, monster movies and so forth. One of the things he says is that most monster movies fail because when you finally see the monster—whatever it does, it's disappointing. It's obvious that it's rubber, that it's a man in a suit or that it's animation. The technical limitations of creating a monster fail. When you go for a creature on the screen, if you can do it you hit a home run. That is why I wanted you to see the Thing, as opposed to Hawks' film (the 1951 original version) which showed a lot of shadows and suggestion. That's fabulous, but I've done it several times.

"The Thing is about a lot of different elements. It's mostly about cancer," Carpenter reveals. "A real, live alien cancer that distorts, deforms and mangles the human form. It's about corruption from within. It's about lack of trust and paranoia. It's a very hard and real film. In order to convince the audience that this is really happening, I pulled the stops out and showed you. In another case, if one wanted to tell a different kind of story, with a different premise, then one might not do that at all. You might go the opposite way and have something hiding in shadows."

OLD AND UNSEEN

While sitting in the shadow of the lavish sets for *Big Trouble*, Carpenter discussed a film which was just opening. Although his name was on the script, he'd actually had very little to do with it.

"*Black Moon Rising* was the first script I ever wrote," the director states, "that I was paid for. I got five thousand dollars and an option, in 1974. At that point, that was a fortune. It was originally written for Charles Bronson and sat in a closet until a couple of years ago. I have not seen it. I have no idea what it's like. It's an entirely different film from the way I wrote it. I had Vietnam veterans who had their car stolen so they assault the building using Special Forces techniques. I think they've rewritten it to make it more modern."

For a time Carpenter was scheduled to direct an adaptation of Alfred Bester's *The Stars My Destination*. The project fell apart because, as he explains, "That's a great book—what a lousy script, though. They just couldn't get the script right. Plus, to make that movie right, it would be like doing

Buse—40 or 50 million dollars. Life's too short."

SPECIAL STREET EFFECTS

"I've never seen a movie like this," the director muses, considering the bizarre facets of *Big Trouble in Little China*. "And really, to tell the honest truth, I've always wanted to do a kung fu movie. I'm a big kung fu fan."

To meet the special demands of this strange movie, one sound stage was constructed to symbolize a backstreet in Chinatown.

"You have more control here," Carpenter explains. "You can't do fantasy sequences which are stylized, on a street (on location). It's very difficult. The type of action that the film calls for are very elaborate. A lot of special effects. A lot of kung fu fights, a lot of people shooting lightning bolts and doing aerial flips."

There has never been a film like this. When was the last time you saw Chinese mysticism in a movie? There's no way that there's been a film like this. ■



JACK BURTON (KURT RUSSELL) FIGHTS FOR HIS LIFE!

VIDEO CREATURES

BY RANDY PALMER



I'm happy to say that something *wertwhile* has at last been released for fright film fans! It's the original *Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919) which, for a silent film (here with an added soundtrack) made on a nearly non-existent budget over 60 years ago, still manages to surprise and awe those who view it for the first time.

The story is told in flashback by a nameless narrator who recalls a travelling fair which comes to his town, Holstenwall. With it comes the strange Dr. Caligari, whose sideshow concession features Caesar, the psychic Somnambulist. Caesar's predictions of disaster & doom arouse the suspicions of Holstenwall's police, who maintain a watchful eye on him. Meanwhile the narrator conducts a private investigation of his own and discovers that Caligari is really the administrator of Holstenwall's insane asylum! With the help of the resident doctors, Caligari's scheme—using the hypnotized Caesar to murder Caligari's enemies—is uncovered and the mad doctor is locked in a cell in his own asylum.

(A real prisoner of his work — Evlla)

But that's not all! Caligari's multi-twist ending is a delight. The best scenes are those of the cadaverous Conrad Veldt as Caesar, slinking along the warped & twisted alleyways—certainly the stuff of nightmares. The abduction of Lili Dagover is another highlight (if you can overlook Dagover's overacting—even by 1919 standards it's a bit much).

(She certainly is! — Evlla)

Hollywood Home Theatre has performed a real service by making *Caligari* available to today's video audience. My only complaint is that the video prints could've been made from a better film negative. Even my old 8MM edition of *Caligari* contains fewer scratches, blotches, splitches & glitches! Still, anyone who calls him or herself a horror fan simply must experience *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* at least once in their lives. Now's your chance!

NTA Home Entertainment has just released *Reel Without a Face* (1958), one of the slickest films from the '50s. *Reel's* buildup is slow, at times almost tedious; but the payoff is outstanding! Marshall Thompson encounters a bizarre experiment which involves the materialization of pure thought—as living, pulsing, locomotive brains with wavering antennae & prying feelers. These disembodied brains enjoy drilling holes in human skulls and sucking out the brain matter—certainly one of the beatifoulest ideas to come out of the '50s! The film's finale is intense, scary stuff: victims covering inside a country house (George Romero would repeat the setup 10 years later in his *Night of the Living Dead*) are attacked by the brains—hundreds of them—which tear down boarded-up windows with their feelers and invade the place en masse, sort of like a perverted version of Hitchcock's *The Birds* (except that *Reel Without a Face* came first!). These fiends aren't indestructible; they can be shot, stabbed, squashed, punctured, fallen upon...and they ooze & splatter great gobs of black glop—I'm tellin' ya, it's terrific stuff! You can't go wrong renting *Reel Without a Face*; it's one of the finest "brain movies" ever made. (Sounds like a real brain teaser — Evlla)

Wes Craven's early horror hit, *Last House on the Left* (1972), has just been rereleased by Vestron, supposedly with newly-discovered footage which had originally been excised. After seeing it for the first time in 14 years, I can't say which scenes are the new ones. But does it matter? The important point is *Last House* is still as gross & sick & shocking as it was when first released. Director Craven & producer Sean Cunningham should be delighted to know that the years haven't dulled its impact.

The incidental plot follows the depraved antics of a gang of rapists/killers who dabble & slaughter two innocent girls and who later die at the vengeful hands (and mouths) of the parents. It's strong stuff; it's one of those "landmark" films (like *Blood Feast* was a landmark, not like *Curse of the Frankensteins* was a landmark) that sets trends for years to come.

Fair warning: keep a barf bag handy.

(Okay, I'll ask him to come — Evlla)







DREGS.
KEEP ON SCANNING!

Giorgio Armani